

TABLE 28. Median years to doctorate, by broad field of study: Selected years, 1984–2009

Field of study and time to degree	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009
All fields						
Since bachelor's	10.0	10.6	10.8	10.4	10.0	9.3
Since starting graduate school	8.5	8.7	8.7	8.2	8.0	7.7
Life sciences ^a						
Since bachelor's	8.3	9.3	9.5	9.0	8.8	8.5
Since starting graduate school	7.0	7.7	7.7	7.3	7.0	7.0
Physical sciences ^b						
Since bachelor's	7.2	7.4	8.4	7.9	7.8	7.5
Since starting graduate school	6.2	6.6	7.2	6.7	6.7	6.7
Social sciences ^c						
Since bachelor's	9.9	10.5	10.5	10.0	10.0	9.4
Since starting graduate school	8.2	8.7	8.7	7.9	7.9	7.7
Engineering						
Since bachelor's	8.0	8.3	9.0	8.7	8.4	7.9
Since starting graduate school	6.7	6.7	7.2	7.2	7.2	6.9
Education						
Since bachelor's	14.8	17.3	19.7	19.8	17.7	16.2
Since starting graduate school	12.2	14.2	15.9	14.7	12.7	12.3
Humanities						
Since bachelor's	11.7	12.6	12.0	11.7	11.6	11.3
Since starting graduate school	10.2	10.7	10.0	9.7	9.6	9.5
Other non-S&E fields						
Since bachelor's	12.3	13.3	13.5	14.0	13.0	12.4
Since starting graduate school	10.2	10.7	10.8	10.7	9.9	9.7

^a Includes agricultural sciences/natural resources, biological/biomedical sciences, and health sciences.^b Includes mathematics and computer and information sciences.^c Includes psychology.

SOURCE: NSF/NIH/USED/USDA/NEH/NASA, 2009 Survey of Earned Doctorates.